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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Rural Electrification Administration  
Washington 25, D. C.

\* INFORMATION SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FIELDMEN \*

You as a fieldman have a big stake in the member education programs of the co-ops you serve.

First, remember that you share in REA's obligation to make sure the loans are repaid. That being the case, you have to be concerned with the fact that the poorest risks are co-ops having uninformed members -- members who do not know how to make the best use of electricity or who know little about how a cooperative must operate to be successful. With more than 90 percent of our borrowers organized as cooperatives, owned and controlled locally by their member patrons, the success of the entire REA program depends on the ability of these co-op borrowers to function effectively as cooperatives.

Second, education and information programs can help make your own particular job more effective. Review in your mind the co-ops you know are having troubles of an organizational or management nature. You will probably find that these are also the co-ops which have done the least in developing informed and active memberships.

This is what the Administrator says: "Experience has proved that, if carried out effectively, it (a member education program) will pay high dividends in terms of good member relations, more effective power use, better cooperation and management policies and procedures, lower operation and maintenance cost, greater security for the co-op as a user-owned and controlled business, and wider community support."

You have a lot to gain if your co-ops are carrying on effective member education. As a fieldman, you are in a good position to help borrowers institute or improve their member education work. This is not difficult, nor will it take much of your time. The Information Services Division can be of help to you in many ways. Below are some of the principal aids that are yours to use for the asking.

Aids in Starting Education Programs

HANDBOOK ON CO-OP EDUCATION ACTIVITIES: This handbook -- soon to be published -- contains a wide range of suggestions on how to set up a well-rounded member education program. It will provide you with something specific to give co-ops when they ask you for help in planning or improving their education work.

Our aim in preparing the handbook has been to compile specific, practical suggestions on educational techniques that have been successfully used by REA and other co-ops to bring information on co-op affairs and power use to their members. Distribution of this handbook, once it is printed, will be to those co-ops having education workers plus any other co-ops that you recommend. There will be no blanket distribution.

HIGHLIGHT OUTLINE OF AN EDUCATION PROGRAM: Until the handbook described above is available, the Administrator's Co-op Chat and attachments on member education make up the most comprehensive material available to you to help co-ops lay out a member education program.

This material tells why education is vital to co-op success. It also outlines briefly suggestions for developing and maintaining effective member participation and for helping members to use electricity effectively. It offers a guide as to desirable qualifications for an education or electrification adviser.

WHY TELLING THE MEMBERS IS IMPORTANT, from RE News, October-November 1947: You will find this helpful in working with co-ops which may not be aware of the reasons for member education.

WHAT CO-OP MEMBERS NEED TO KNOW, from RE News, December 1947-January 1948: This will help you answer the question as to what information a co-op needs to give its members.

EDUCATIONAL WORKERS' PACKET: A packet of printed and processed material is available to co-op educational workers who would like to obtain some background for their jobs. This packet is made up in a manila folder, and is intended for distribution to educational workers by fieldmen. Distribution is at present being made chiefly by the Applications and Loans Division.

#### Printed Publications

You have available to you a variety of printed publications that you can offer co-ops to help them in member education work. Some of these are available from REA; others from various other sources.

Below is an inventory of the titles of REA publications with information as to availability and suggested use. If you are unfamiliar with any of these publications, we shall be glad to send you samples. Publications marked (\*) will not be available in bulk until about August 1, 1948. Up to date publications lists will be sent you periodically.

#### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PUBLICATIONS (suitable for distribution at annual meetings):

A Guide for Members of Rural Electric Co-ops (24 pp)

Your Co-op -- Your Business (2 pp)

What You Will Own in Your REA Co-op (Capital Credits Information) (4pp)

This Is an REA Co-op (6 pp)

Electricity Comes to Rural America (16 pp)

A special envelope stuffer "See You at the Co-op Annual Meeting" can be used before the annual meeting to encourage attendance.

It contains space for the co-op's own imprint, with time and place of the meeting, and does not have an REA identification.

POWER USE PUBLICATIONS FOR MEMBERS (The following groups of publications are suitable for mailing to members with or without the monthly newsletter, or for distribution at wiring meetings, repair clinics, other special member meetings, etc.):

Wiring, Lighting and Safety Publications:

- Planning Your Farmstead Wiring and Lighting (32 pp)
- Your Electric Wiring (6 pp)
- Your Wiring Check List (4 pp)
- How to Keep Power on the Job (4 pp)
- It's Smart to Play Safe (4 pp)

Publications on Farm Power Use:

- Your Electrified Farm (4 pp)
- Make This Pig Brooder (4 pp)\*
- A Home-Made Electric Chick Brooder (4 pp)
- How to Keep Power on the Job (4 pp)
- Build a Hay-Drier for Your Barn (4 pp)
- More Power to Your Poultry Raising (4 pp)\*
- Make This Motor Table (2 pp)
- A Small Portable Motor (4 pp)
- You Can Make This Motor Toter (2 pp)
- Farm Motors -- Selection and Installation (4 pp)\*
- Care of Your Electric Motor (2 pp)\*
- Make Your Own Egg Cooler (2 pp)\*
- More Power to Your Dairying (4 pp)\*

Publications on Home Power Use:

- Making Light Work for You (16 pp)
- Care and Use of Your Small Electric Appliances (4 pp)\*
- Where Shall I Place My New Electrical Equipment? (4 pp)
- Make This Table Lamp (2 pp)\*

Plumbing Publications:

- Selecting the Right Water Pump (2 pp)
- Water For the Modern Farmstead (4 pp)
- Care of the Electric Water System (2 pp)\*
- Water When and Where Your Garden Needs It (2 pp)
- A new 16-page publication on farm water systems and plumbing plans will be available this fall.

Publications on Consumer Facilities Loans:

New Loan Program for Consumers (4pp). This leaflet is intended to acquaint consumers with Section 5 loans.

Helping Farmers to Get Equipment (16 pp) is available to acquaint co-op leaders with the Section 5 program and with other equipment supply problems.

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PUBLICATIONS FOR USE WITH OTHER GROUPS:

Youth Groups:

Electricity and Tomorrow's Farmer (2 pp)  
All power use publications listed above.

Teachers:

Teaching Rural Electrification (4 pp)\*  
Electricity and Tomorrow's Farmer (2 pp)  
Planning the Modern Small School (2 pp)  
All power use publications listed above.

Health Leaders:

Electricity and Rural Health (2 pp)

General Public (at fairs, etc.):

Electricity Comes to Rural America (16 pp)  
This is an REA Co-op (6 pp)  
Your Electrified Farm (4 pp)

**NON-REA PUBLICATIONS:** We can furnish a partial list of the electrical equipment manufacturers and co-op organizations which have literature available. Several of the State Agricultural Colleges also have some farm electrification literature which you can obtain for co-ops.

Co-op's Own Publications

We will be glad to provide technical assistance and editorial suggestions to fieldmen who wish to interest co-ops in printing their own publications or who may be called upon to help with such projects.

For some time we have sought to encourage co-ops, either individually or in their statewide groups, to undertake the publication of localized consumer literature. This is in line with REA's policy of promoting co-op self-reliance and also would enable us to concentrate more and more on publications that will help local leaders (e.g. board members, co-op staff members, school teachers, civic leaders and others) to do a better job for the rural electrification program.

Whatever you can do to stimulate more local publication work therefore will be most helpful.

Co-op Member Periodicals

**POLICY:** As you know, it has long been REA's policy to urge co-ops to maintain frequent contact with their members through regular member periodicals. This is one of the chief methods for keeping the individual member informed on what goes on in his own co-op business and for getting him interested in his co-op's problems and achievements. Until the war was over, the co-op's own mimeographed or offset newsletter was the main vehicle for accomplishing this job, and REA put a great deal of emphasis on the publication of such newsletters. Since the war co-ops in several of the States, working through their statewides, have launched statewide papers for distribution to all members.

A year ago, the Agency officially recognized, in a policy statement, that the type of periodical a co-op or group of co-ops might select as the most effective in its local situation was entirely a matter for local decision. It was pointed out that ideally the newsletter and the State paper filled different needs and thus they supplemented one another. A number of co-ops are actually sending their members both a State paper and a locally published newsletter. Many co-ops, however, have apparently felt that because of cost one type of periodical would have to suffice at least for the time being. In those cases we have held to the position that whatever they judged to be the most effective method was the type they should use since our concern is essentially that some type of communication be maintained with members. As a consequence, we have continued to make available assistance on newsletters and in States where State papers are not published we shall place special emphasis on the use of newsletters while providing insofar as possible the kind of information service the State papers desire.

**KIT OF SUGGESTIONS:** If you have occasion to work with co-ops in the field of member periodicals we can supply you with a kit of suggestions on how a co-op can go about getting information regularly to its members. The kit includes a discussion of the type of material suitable for either a newsletter or a co-op department in a State paper. Also included is information on how to process a newsletter.

#### Annual Meeting Material

**ANNUAL MEETING PACKET:** When you are called upon for help in connection with a co-op's annual meeting, you may want to call attention to a packet of annual meeting suggestions entitled "Planning Your Annual Meeting," which should be on hand in most co-op offices. This packet contains many samples of material co-ops have used to promote good attendance. It also has suggestions for an interesting program and gives samples of the various reports presented at annual meetings.

The current packet was prepared a year ago and has been sent to co-ops in advance of their annual meeting dates. We hope to prepare an up-to-date version of this kit and any specific suggestions you have that will help co-ops plan better annual meetings will be greatly appreciated. We would also like to have samples of reports, charts and other material that have been successfully used.

**BACKDROPS:** Fieldmen have also been called upon by many co-ops for exhibit and other visual material suitable for use in dressing up annual meetings. One of these items, for which we have received a great many requests is the large blue REA backdrop with which many of you are familiar. The number of these backdrops we have is so small that we have been having great difficulty in filling the many requests.

When you do receive a request for a backdrop, therefore, we urge that you try to interest the co-op, perhaps in combination with a group of co-ops, in acquiring its own backdrop. Sketches of four different designs for Statewide and local backdrops were included with our memorandum of April 21, 1948. Additional copies of the memo and sketches are available if you need them.

OTHER ANNUAL MEETING VISUAL MATERIAL: Our other visual material for use in connection with annual meetings is very limited and we believe it is most desirable to use what we have on newer co-ops or co-ops having special problems. The only items which we have in sufficient quantities to furnish generally are a small table-top display on the subject of area coverage and two REA posters produced in 1945. These items alone do not make a very impressive showing, although they are probably of some help if used in combination with other materials such as those usually supplied by dealers for equipment displays. These materials become the property of the co-ops and may be used over again as long as they remain in usable condition.

### Exhibits

We are no longer producing visual materials in quantities for co-op use. This is the result partly of budgetary and personnel conditions. It also stems from our effort to adapt our work more fully to the Administrator's policy on assistance to borrowers. What we are trying to do is to shift away from the production of informational materials for co-ops and to concentrate instead on turning out suggestions that will help co-ops prepare or procure their own materials for educational and informational use.

You may find the information below helpful whenever you have occasion to work with co-ops on exhibit programs.

LARGE EXHIBITS: In a limited number of cases we can lend a co-op a large exhibit for use at a county or State fair. The only cost to the co-op is payment of express charges on receipt of the exhibit from the co-op using it previously. Unfortunately only three such exhibits will be available for circulation in 1948. Requests for their use, therefore, will have to be submitted early so that an effective schedule can be worked out for the season. Since the number of showings will necessarily be relatively small, preference will have to be given on the basis of:

1. The co-op's need of help; e.g., a co-op with a particularly difficult educational situation will be put at the top of the list.
2. The size and nature of the gathering at which the exhibit will be shown.
3. The extent to which the co-op is willing to use local material to heighten the effect of the REA exhibit.

EXHIBIT BOOKLET: We recommend that you bring to the attention of all exhibit-minded co-ops the REA booklet, "How Your REA Co-op Can Use Exhibits to Help Tell Its Story," which was distributed to all borrowers and fieldmen in the early part of June. Except for the few co-ops which are able to borrow exhibits, this booklet represents all the exhibit assistance we will be able to provide this year. In most cases, a co-op which builds one of the exhibits described in this booklet will

have a more effective display than if it borrowed one from REA. In addition to specific plans, the booklet contains considerable general information about manning an exhibit, arranging for exhibit space and caring for exhibits.

**CO-OP DISPLAYS:** You will want to have information about the set of 12 displays now available to co-ops desiring to get their story before the communities they serve. These displays, suitable for windows, counters, lobbies, schools, etc., are approximately 3 x 5 feet in size and are printed on heavy display board in up to eight attractive colors.

Subjects included in the series were selected following a survey of the co-ops last summer. They include:

Local ownership and control.	How a Co-op Functions.
Annual meeting.	Electricity -- a new farm element.
Adequate wiring.	Go all-electric.
Area coverage.	Rural Electrification and the business man.
Farm water systems.	Electrified dairying
Electrified kitchen.	Electricity and rural health.

Information on how co-ops may order these displays has been sent to you and to the co-ops. How soon the displays will be delivered depends largely on how soon at least another 100 orders are received. It should be pointed out that in case enough orders are not received, the manufacturer will drop the proposition. If that happens, a promising source of visual educational aids for REA co-ops will be lost.

#### Radio

You may frequently have an opportunity to help your co-ops in making use of radio to reach their members and their communities. We have, at present, two items you could use to good advantage in such cases.

**RADIO HANDBOOK:** This is a comprehensive handbook of practical suggestions on how to make use of radio most effectively in reaching farm people. It is an Extension Service publication and we are able to fill only single copy requests.

**TRANSCRIPTIONS:** We have available a 4-part radio transcription, featuring REA specialists giving information on effective use of power. Local information may be built around the transcriptions.

One objective of this transcription is to give co-ops an opportunity to meet and get acquainted with their local radio people. (We can supply the name of the radio farm director in any particular area.) We believe that if the two of them once get together they will work out a continuing radio arrangement. The local programs that will result will be more effective than anything we could provide. That is one reason we no longer write scripts for co-ops. Our aim in radio, as in other educational activities, is to help the co-ops do the radio work themselves rather than to do the job for them.

Press

When you are asked for suggestions by co-ops working with local newspapers on special rural electrification editions, you may obtain a packet of material from us, containing a great deal of material already prepared for such editions. It includes stories on program progress, effective use of power and cooperative operations. We also have mats available. We shall be glad to send a packet of this material to you or to a cooperative at your suggestion. Requests for assistance with individual press relations matters are handled insofar as possible.

Photographic Aids

**MOTION PICTURES:** To give you a handy reference of motion pictures suitable for showing at REA co-op meetings, we periodically compile and distribute a list of 16 mm. movies that have come to our attention. A revision of this list is now in process and copies will be made available to you in the near future.

The number of requests received from fieldmen and borrowers in recent months for motion picture information indicates that co-ops in increasing numbers recognize the value of well-selected movies in drawing crowds and providing information at meetings. Some co-ops appear to have developed many sources of valuable films. Others, as you know, are just beginning to use motion pictures and have difficulty in locating appropriate films. Our list is intended primarily as an aid to the latter group.

Your assistance will be appreciated in calling our attention to good films that may be available but which we have not listed.

Prints of the two REA films, "Bob Marshall Comes Home" and "Power and the Land," should be requested from the State film libraries rather than from us.

**STILL PICTURES:** Occasions may arise when you will have need of rural electrification pictures, either in the 8 x 10 size or large blow-ups. We maintain a file of pictures and will be in a position to provide photographs.

Material for Work With Young People

Some fieldmen have indicated that co-ops are showing interest in working with young people through schools and clubs. When you are asked for suggestions in such undertakings, we have available to you a comprehensive discussion of the entire subject of electricity and rural youth. It includes many suggestions as to how youth and school programs might be developed. All this information was printed in RE News in the October-November 1947 issue. If you do not have a copy of this issue of the magazine, we shall be glad to send you one.

Rural Electrification News

The Rural Electrification News can be an effective tool in your work with the co-ops. To make it such a tool, however, your help is essential.

**DISTRIBUTION OF THE NEWS:** The News is distributed bi-monthly to all co-op offices and to all co-op directors at their homes. In addition it is sent regularly to several thousand teachers of vocational agriculture.

With board members, the News is virtually the only line of regular communication the Agency has. As a consequence, we have sought during recent months to direct it along lines that would increase its value to directors. We have emphasized articles recommended by the operating divisions for their value in explaining Agency programs and policies to board members. Your suggestions as to what specific material should be included in future issues would be of great value to us in increasing the usefulness of the publication to you in your work.

**CONTENT OF THE NEWS:** Some months ago we adopted a policy of devoting a substantial section of each issue of the News to a subject matter "theme." The object has been to make each of these issues an authoritative and reasonably complete presentation of the information available on the theme subject. We believe you may find it of value to maintain a file of the News so that you can refer readily to these theme issues when questions arise on the subjects that have been covered. We would also appreciate suggestions as to future themes.

The following themes have been treated since this plan was adopted:

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Issue</u>
Electric Rates	April-May, 1947
Wiring	June-July, 1947
* Lighting	August-September, 1947
Electricity and Rural Youth	October-November, 1947
** How a Rural Electric Co-op Is Run	December-1947--January-1948
** The Co-op Staff	February-March, 1948
** Co-op Financing	April-May, 1948
Planning For Full Power Use.	June-July, 1948

\* Now available as reprint entitled "Making Light Work For You."

\*\* These three issues are maintained as one packet which is mailed to all new co-op directors whose names are reported to the Management Division.

**CO-OP REPRINT PAGE:** The back cover of each issue of the News contains a feature suited to reprinting in co-op newsletters. It is particularly intended for offset letters since the printed magazine page can be used as copy. The use of this feature has not been as common as we believe it would be if the matter were brought more directly to the attention of co-op managers and educational workers.

